

Desegregation in 3D:
Displacement, Dispersal, and Development in American public housing.

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Since the early 1990s, American public housing policy has emphasized the demolition of older, dysfunctional housing estates, and the geographic dispersal of subsidized households. This strategy is a response to high levels of racial and class segregation in American cities (Goering 2003) and to the deteriorating conditions in public housing communities (HUD 2002b). The largest single program within this policy approach is the HOPE VI program that funds the demolition and redevelopment of public housing projects and the relocation of residents. In this paper I examine the logic model behind the HOPE VI program, describing the means by which this program is meant to desegregate and disperse subsidized families and improve their living conditions and the conditions within public housing communities. By explicating the logic model behind the program it is possible to examine the range of assumptions and expectations forming the basis of dispersal approaches to racial segregation and poverty concentration. It is also possible to assess those assumptions and expectations next to the growing body of empirical evidence related to the impact of public housing redevelopment and the HOPE VI program.

American cities have been characterized by high levels of racial and ethnic segregation for many decades. To a significant extent these patterns of segregation are the result of systematic discrimination in the housing market against people of color. Discrimination is most prevalent against blacks, though fair housing audits have shown consistent discrimination against other ethnic minorities (Ross and Turner, 2005; Zhao, Ondrich and Yinger 2006). Similarly, the level of residential segregation is highest

among blacks, although studies show significant segregation of Hispanics and other minority groups in some metropolitan areas (Johnston et al. 2003). These issues have generated decades of public policy responses in the U.S. Most noticeably, the fair housing movement made significant strides in the 1960s, and with passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968 succeeded in making most forms of discrimination in housing illegal. In the 1970s a series of regulatory reforms in mortgage lending were initiated to eliminate racially based discrimination in homebuying.

Analysts have continued to document the significant costs to society and to excluded populations of high rates of racial/ethnic segregation (see e.g., Peterson and Krivo 1999; van Kempen and Ozuekren 1998). Despite this, support for public policies that address racial disparities in housing has never been widespread in the U.S. As Sniderman and Carmines (1997: 466) argue, “large numbers of white Americans remain opposed to a wide array of public policies, from social welfare through affirmative action, aimed at finally achieving racial equality.” Roisman (2001, p. 187) points out that the legislative language for regional affordable housing programs in the states of New Jersey and Massachusetts do not mention race even though the initiatives “are rooted in concerns about racial segregation.” In both states, Roisman argues, concerns about racial segregation were subordinated to economic terms out of a conviction that racial patterns were a subset of larger patterns of economic segregation, and out of concern that the American public was not ready to accept aggressive policy aimed at racial integration (Roisman 2001).

This tendency to translate patterns of racial segregation into economic terms accelerated after social scientists identified the phenomenon of concentrated poverty in

American cities. In the late 1980s, researchers such as Wilson (1987), Jargowsky and Bane (1991), and Danziger and Gottschalk (1987) documented large and growing spatial concentrations of poverty in American cities. At first scattered throughout larger and older cities of the northeast and Midwestern rust belt, concentrated poverty became ubiquitous by the 1990s (Jargowsky 1996). Concentrated poverty has strong racial overtones; poor people of color are many times more likely to live in concentrated poverty than are poor whites, and most of the residents of concentrated poverty neighborhoods are people of color (Jargowsky 1996; 2003). The entire phenomenon of advanced marginality epitomized by concentrated poverty largely overlapped racial divisions in American cities (Wacquant 2008). Thus, official concern about concentrated poverty could easily have been expressed in racial terms, or could easily have been connected by officials to concerns about racial segregation. Indeed, in 1990, when administration officials took up the idea of creating a national program of deconcentration they modeled it on a court-ordered racial desegregation program in Chicago called the Gautreaux Program (Goering 2003). Nevertheless, federal housing officials in the administration of the first Bush explicitly decided to shift program objectives away from racial desegregation to poverty deconcentration. The resulting program, which came to be known as the Moving To Opportunity (MTO) program was enacted as an economic desegregation program (Goering 2003, p. 42-3). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) officials from that point forward focused their rhetoric and policy initiatives on *poverty deconcentration* rather than *racial desegregation* (see, e.g., Cisneros 1995).

Public Housing Redevelopment and HOPE VI

In 1993 Congress created the nation's main program aimed at deconcentrating poverty, the HOPE VI program. The main program objectives are the improvement of living conditions for residents of public housing, physically transforming distressed public housing developments, and deconcentrating poverty (HUD 2002b; Popkin et al. 2004; Wexler 2001). The program operates as a competitive grant program that requires applicants to demonstrate that the public housing projects proposed for redevelopment meet at least one of the following definitions of "severe distress": 1) families in distress (including low incomes and a low number with earned income), 2) high levels of crime, 3) management problems (including high vacancy and turnover rates), and 4) physical deterioration of the project. HUD reviews grant applications using four criteria: 1) need for the redevelopment project, 2) the capacity of the local housing authority to carry out the proposed project, 3) the quality of the revitalization plan, and 4) the potential of the project to leverage other capital.

Several dimensions of the program have evolved over time, including the relative importance of rehabilitation and demolition in redevelopment strategies, the relative emphasis on leveraging of private sector investment, and the allowable scope of the projects (see Zhang and Weismann 2006). The program as originally established was limited to the 40 largest public housing authorities¹ and an additional 12 that were on HUD's list of "troubled" housing authorities (Fosburg, Popkin and Locke 1996). Subsequent changes opened up the program to all local public housing authorities (PHAs), though projects still had to meet the threshold of distress.

The most important part of the evolution of the HOPE VI program relates to how it moved from an orientation toward rehabilitation to a program that relies on demolition. HUD acknowledges that when the program was created it was “an embellished modernization program” for public housing (GAO 2002), little different than the existing MROP program (Major Reconstruction of Obsolete Public Housing). Demolition efforts were constrained in the early years of the program by the requirement that public housing be replaced on a one-for-one basis. This made demolition financially challenging, and diluted the deconcentration objectives of the program. In 1995, Congress repealed the one-for-one replacement requirement, allowing demolition to become the centerpiece of the HOPE VI program.

In the same year, HUD began to emphasize the leveraging of private sector capital in HOPE VI projects. One year later, in 1996 the program began to allow mixed-financing, allowing public housing authorities to use other public and private financing to build public housing, or to channel public housing funds to third parties to develop public housing units. HUD additionally encouraged local housing authorities during this time to be entrepreneurial and innovative (to “incorporate boldness and creativity” according to Fosburg, Popkin and Locke 1996) in their HOPE VI applications, fundamentally rethinking the public housing model that had prevailed for close to 60 years. These changes and the reorientation of the program away from a relatively staid concept of public housing improvement was part of the political response of HUD to the 1994 midterm elections and the efforts on the part of a new conservative majority in Congress to question HUD’s legitimacy. The new HOPE VI, an effort to “redefine” public housing, was recognizably part of a larger effort to redefine HUD and its entire range of

housing programs during this time period. For the first time in the program's history, conventional public housing was operated on the basis of mixed financing, mixed ownership, and in many cases private management. In these respects, HOPE VI became a vehicle, according to some, for the privatization of public housing (Harvard Law Review 2003; Hackworth 2007).

The Theory of HOPE VI benefits

The HOPE VI program of public housing redevelopment in the U.S. was created to produce two major types of beneficial outcomes; better outcomes for the residents of distressed public housing projects, and better neighborhood conditions in the projects themselves and their surrounding neighborhoods (Goetz 2003, Wexler 2001). As with other programs to disperse low-income households and thereby deconcentrate poverty, the HOPE VI program is based on a set of expectations that changing the neighborhood environment in which poor families live will change and improve their personal circumstances. The HOPE VI program attempts to achieve these outcomes in two ways: by moving poor families into middle-income neighborhoods and by improving conditions within previous low-income public housing neighborhoods. There are several theoretical justifications for expecting such beneficial outcomes.

Individual level benefits

The literature on neighborhood (or area) effects provides the theoretical basis for identifying a number of dynamics by which neighborhoods can improve life chances and through which individuals can benefit or suffer based on the neighborhood conditions in which they live (see Joseph et al. 2007; Ellen and Turner, 1997). *Social capital theory*, for example, posits that a person's social networks provide a range of direct and indirect

supports that can enhance labor market connections and earning potential. Perhaps the earliest and most succinct expression of this view is Granovetter's work on the importance of "weak ties" that link individuals to a much wider network of information and resources than is defined by that person's network of friends and relatives (1973). This argument implies an important distinction between weak and strong ties, or the difference between what Briggs (1997) calls bridging social capital (the weak ties that connect people to resources outside of their immediate social network) and bonding social capital (the strong ties of family and friends that provide more direct forms of support or resources). Neighborhoods of concentrated poverty are seen as providing limited bridging social capital due to the narrowness or redundancy in social networks (constrained as they are by the uniform poverty of most neighbors and acquaintances). Further, concentrated poverty can possibly damage bonding social capital if residents react to high crime rates or other neighborhood problems by withdrawing from routine social interactions (see e.g., Klinenberg 2002). Moving into mixed-income neighborhoods can expand social networks and increase an individual's access to resources that would allow him or her to "get ahead" economically.

A second body of theory speaking to the impact of neighborhood conditions on individual level outcomes focuses on the way that neighborhoods influence behavior. Such "behavioral" propositions (Joseph et al. 2007) include *contagion theory* which focuses on peer influences, *socialization theory* which identifies a range of possible influences that cross generations and class, and *social isolation theory* that suggests conditions of extreme social isolation can lead to 'situationally adaptive' behaviors.

Contagion theory points to the importance of “the company you keep” (Case and Katz 1991), and posits that a range of nominally anti-social behaviors from criminality to dropping out of school are more likely if one’s social circle engages in similar behavior (Rowe and Rodgers 1994). Similarly, socialization theory posits that behavior is in part conditioned by the attitudes and behaviors of others sharing the same environment. Socialization theory extends beyond the peer group and suggests that behavior is conditioned by a broader set of influences that can include inter-generational influences and cross-class influences. For example, Wilson (1997, 72) argues that “skills, habits, and styles are often shaped by the frequency at which they are found in their own community.” Persons exposed to the example of neighbors successfully engaging in productive economic roles, according to the argument, will be more likely to emulate that behavior than others for whom the norm is joblessness. In this way, it is argued, working and middle class neighbors can be role models to the poor.

Finally, some contend that living in a neighborhood of uniform deprivation can generate what Wilson (1997) calls “situationally adaptive” behavior, or the substitution of a new set of behaviors and norms for mainstream goals that are largely unattainable in neighborhoods of high poverty. For example, Massey and Denton (1993, 167) write of “an alternative status system [that] has evolved within America’s ghettos that is defined in opposition to the basic ideals and values of American society. It is a culture that explains and legitimizes the social and economic shortcomings of ghetto blacks” (see also Anderson 1990). Wilson (1987, 60) stresses that these adaptive behaviors are induced by “social isolation – defined in this context as the lack of contact or of sustained interaction with individuals and institutions that represent mainstream society.” Social isolation

effects are thus distinct from “culture of poverty” explanations that attribute the social and economic marginality of the poor to their basic value system (Wilson 1987.). Social isolation theory suggests that these behaviors are not value-based, but rather induced by material deprivation.

In sum, the individual level benefits generated through efforts such as HOPE VI are based on “changing the structure of constraints and opportunities” (Wilson 1987, 61), or what some have called the “geography of opportunity” (Galster and Killen 1995). Redevelopment and dispersal offer the possibility of altering the anti-social behaviors of those experiencing extreme social isolation, enhancing the networks of social capital available to low-income residents, and providing more positive behavioral cues.

Community level benefits

Expectations of community level benefits from the redevelopment of public housing in the U.S. derive from three different theoretical perspectives; *environmental design*, *social disorganization*, and *political economy theory*.

Environmental design theory posits that the design and form of built environments impact behavior. In the neighborhood context, this theory suggests that the number and nature of social interactions and the degree to which people engage in neighboring activities is conditioned by the opportunities for such interactions that are provided by the organization and design of public and private space (e.g., Levine 1986; Riger, LeBailly and Gordon 1981; Freeman 2001). Streetscapes can either enhance or interfere with interactions between neighbors and the play of children (Bosselmann et al. 1999; Jacobs 1993). These effects have implications for the development of social capital (Nasar 2003, Brown and Cropper 2001), and for social control and criminal

activity since some environments facilitate greater social interactions and observation than others (Jacobs 1993; Newman 1972). More recently, Frumkin, Frank, and Jackson (2004) argue that urban design at both the macro (regional) and micro (street) scales can have public health impacts that range from exposure to environmental contaminants (polluted air and water) and dangerous environments (high speed automobile traffic), to obesity (from induced inactivity) and mental stress (from exposure to harsh environments). The claims for design impacts on behavior extend to travel behavior; “pedestrian friendly” design, for example, is seen as inducing certain travel and transportation choices (see, e.g., Kitamura et al. 1997; Lund 2003).

In particular, the HOPE VI demolition and redevelopment model emphasizes the design flaws associated with much American public housing. Explanations of the failure of the worst public housing estates in the U.S. and elsewhere often make reference to a process of physical decline leading to social dysfunction (e.g., Biles 2000). The litany of design mistakes attributed to public housing is by now familiar to many and associated primarily with the adoption of modernist architectural principles. The most fundamental design flaw might be simply the size of many projects (Holzman, Kudrick and Voytek 1996). The infamous Pruitt-Igoe project, for example, located over 2,800 units in 33 highrise buildings in one swath of land in a poor neighborhood of Saint Louis. The Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago, when fully inhabited, housed 27,000 people in 28 identical 16-story highrise buildings. All 27,000 inhabitants were poor, 20,000 of them were children, almost all were black (Biles 2000). Projects of this size simply overwhelmed the capacity of the local infrastructure to accommodate them.

The design flaws of public housing were not limited to highrise apartment buildings. Even the low-rise, townhouse structures violate many of the strictures that Newman (1972) claims are central to creating defensible space, or that advocates of New Urbanism (or “Traditional Neighborhood Design” – TND) claim are critical to building social capital (Bothwell, Gindroz and Lang 1998). Individual housing units are undifferentiated, and there is no defined territoriality in the outdoor space. The space between buildings is ill-defined open space, most of it paved over. Projects were built on large superblocks, cut off from the typical grid pattern of the surrounding community. This left large areas in the middle of projects open to criminal activity and other forms of incivility” (Bothwell, Gindroz and Lang 1998: 96).

The second theoretical justification for community level benefits of public housing redevelopment comes from social disorganization theory. This theory posits that criminal and anti-social behavior is enabled when a community “is unable to exercise informal social control over its residents or to achieve common goals” (Popkin et al. 2000). Wilson and Kelling’s (1982) “broken window” hypothesis, for example, suggests that a broken window left unfixed is a signal that no one cares or that no one is in charge of a particular building or area. Such a signal attracts criminal behavior and will ultimately lead to a breakdown of community controls.

A piece of property is abandoned, weeds grow up, a window is smashed. Adults stop scolding rowdy children; the children, emboldened, become more rowdy. Families move out, unattached adults move in. Teenagers gather in front of the corner store. The merchant asks them to move; they refuse. Fights occur. Litter accumulates. People start drinking in front of the grocery; in time, an inebriate slumps to the sidewalk and is allowed to sleep it off. Pedestrians are approached by panhandlers. (Wilson and Kelling 1982: 32)

That physical signs of disorder lead to more serious forms of decline and disorder has become widely accepted (Sampson 2001). Skogan (1990), for example expands the application of the thesis to go beyond predictions of more crime, to explain more generalized patterns of neighborhood decline. He focused on the tendency for disorder to destabilize communities by undermining resident satisfaction and by reducing participation in neighborhood affairs. According to Skogan, disorder engenders fear and anger among neighborhood residents, but it also demoralizes them. Ultimately, disorder is associated with a range of negative neighborhood level outcomes that go beyond crime and fear of crime (see Cohen et al. 2000, for a link between physical disorder and higher rates of gonorrhea). Klinenberg (2001, 91) describes a “dangerous ecology of abandoned buildings, open spaces, commercial depletion, violent crime, degraded infrastructure, low population density, and family dispersion [that] undermines the viability of public life and the strength of local support systems.” Ultimately, the physical decline triggers the breakdown of community controls, the flight of families with means, the psychological withdrawal of families who remained, and the loss of social support networks that sustained informal social control (or what Sampson and Raudenbusch, 1998, call collective efficacy).

Finally, urban political economy arguments suggest a number of positive economic and community benefits deriving from the physical upgrading of deteriorated physical environments. The classic statement of this approach was made by Peterson (1981) who suggested that developmental policies (such as urban renewal) are in the general interests of the community because they generate economic growth; “what is good for business is good for the community” (Peterson 1981, 143), Policies that

enhance tax base, create jobs, and incentivize business development, formation, or immigration therefore produce benefits to the community in general. The redevelopment of dysfunctional public housing developments in the heart of urban areas is simply an example or special case of the larger dynamic. The creation of a mixed-income community on the previous site of public housing can induce private sector investment and upgrading. It will also introduce a higher socio-economic class of resident who will demand better services of local governments and who are better able to advocate for those services (Chaskin 2001).

The community-level benefits of public housing redevelopment thus result from the break up concentrations of poverty and the revitalization of the physical environment. These are argued to lead to greater efficacy and social control within the community, to open up investment opportunities that will lead to less crime, higher property values and to the generation of greater demand for public services that will lead to neighborhood improvements and upkeep.

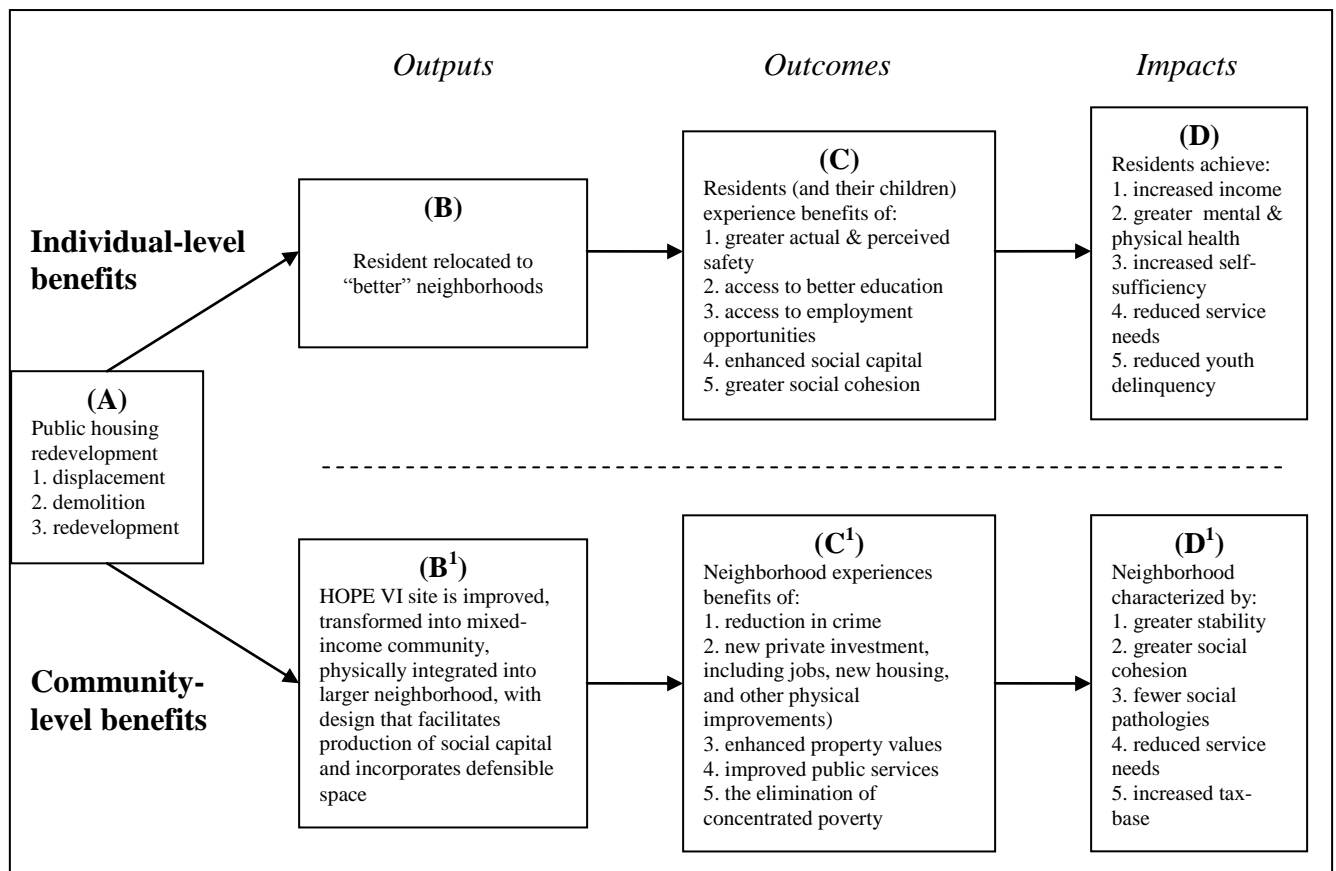
The HOPE VI Logic Model

Based on these theoretical expectations, the HOPE VI program has been designed to generate both individual and community-level benefits. In order to relate the program to the expected benefits associated with it, I examine the “logic model” behind the program. Logic models, or the depiction of connections between program activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts, help to clarify the sequence of actions and events that are meant to take place in the implementation of a public policy or a specific project. As such they highlight the critical linkages that must occur between program resources and participants for program effects to materialize (see Patton 2002). Though logic models

typically do not specify the full range of theoretical connections between concepts and actions embodied in a program, they can identify the specific dynamics of change that are anticipated by policymakers. A logic model of the HOPE VI program, therefore, must describe the process of change to produce benefits at two levels, the individual and the community. As Patton (2002.) argues, they are descriptive rather than explanatory.

Figure 1 presents the logic model for the HOPE VI program.

Figure 1: HOPE VI Logic Model



The HOPE VI program, as it has evolved, has come to emphasize full-scale demolition of public housing estates and complete redevelopment of the sites (Zhang and Weismann 2006). Existing residents must be relocated from the site prior to demolition. Thus, in most cases, HOPE VI begins with the displacement of residents. Demolition of

the site ensues followed by redevelopment into a mixed-income community. These basic features of the program are described in Box (A). From these activities, it is possible to track the creation of both individual and community benefits. In the figure, individual benefits to residents occur along the path from A to D; the community benefits occur along the bottom path from A to D¹.

There is no necessary interaction between the two pathways pictured in figure 1. Community benefits are not contingent upon individual benefits and subsequently they occur independent of whether the original residents of the HOPE VI site share in them or not. The community-benefits pathway, from (A) to (D¹), is relevant to original residents only insofar as they are able to return to the site after the redevelopment is complete. Otherwise, residents must experience the benefits of HOPE VI in their new neighborhoods. The national record of HOPE VI in returning original residents to the finished sites is not impressive. National estimates are that less than one-third of displaced families return to redeveloped HOPE VI sites.

The logic of individual benefits

The path towards individual benefits begins with relocation. HOPE VI was initially created to deal with the nation's worst public housing. In the early 1990s the nation's most dysfunctional public housing was often riddled with crime, drugs, gang activity, and the despair of thousands of poor families trapped in horrific conditions (see e.g., Popkin et al. 2000; Venkatesh 2000). Concentrations of poverty and the hyper segregation of poor people in public housing had been empirically linked to a range of negative personal outcomes from victimization to family breakdown (e.g. Brooks-Gunn

et al. 1993; Anderson 1991). In the conditions that prevailed in these developments, the very act of moving out would produce benefits to residents.

The *inherent* benefits of relocation are an important element of the HOPE VI program and the way in which it was designed by policymakers. This characteristic of the program also distinguishes it, at least at the level of political discourse, from the urban renewal program to which HOPE VI is frequently compared. In the era of urban renewal, the displacement and relocation of low-income families were unavoidable problems and hardships that policymakers strove to minimize. Critics of the program pointed out the tremendous loss of affordable housing resulting from urban renewal (e.g., Parish 1965). Critics also assailed the program for the hardships it inflicted upon low-income families in the form of forced relocation (Hartman 1966). In the late 1960s and into the 1970s, urban renewal exploded politically in city after city across the nation. Residents organized to oppose their own displacement, and were able to delay and ultimately stop projects from going forward in a number of cities (e.g., Stoecker 1994). Residents forced their way into decision-making and planning stages and curbed the worst of the displacement tendencies in the program. Over time the urban renewal approach was scaled back from widespread clearance and demolition to more modest rehabilitation and re-use. The central debate surrounding urban renewal was how to minimize displacement and/or make the relocation process as bearable as possible for families (Monson 1965; Hartman 1966).

With HOPE VI, there is no effort to minimize displacement; in fact, the program has moved away from rehabilitation and renovation toward more complete demolition of projects over time (Zhang and Weismann 2006), a programmatic trajectory exactly the

opposite of what was seen in urban renewal. The assumption behind HOPE VI is that a move to almost any other neighborhood would be an improvement for residents. Indeed, in most cities, the communities of public housing are among the most deprived. Statistically it is likely that displaced persons will relocate to neighborhoods with lower poverty rates, less unemployment, and better housing.

Better conditions in their new neighborhoods give residents access to a number of benefits not available to them previously (link B→C in figure 1). The neighborhoods to which HOPE VI residents move are expected to be safer and/or appear safer than the public housing projects from which they have moved. This would reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime; it also could reduce stress and hypertension among residents. The neighborhoods are more economically viable, and closer to more employment opportunities than the public housing sites. Residents are also less likely to suffer from “address discrimination,” i.e., a negative reaction by a potential employer based on the home address residents put on a job application. Public services, most notably schools, will be better in destination neighborhoods. This would provide children with a safe and more effective learning environment leading to better school outcomes, and could allow for teens and adults to enhance their educational backgrounds, training, and job readiness.

Residents are also expected to benefit from changes in the social environment of their neighborhoods. With a more economically varied set of neighbors, residents are able to access more bridging social capital (Briggs 1997), tapping into social networks that are less redundant than those they left behind in public housing. These weak ties (Granovetter 1973) will increase access to employment opportunities and/or lead to better

training and educational options. At the same time, healthier neighborhoods exhibit higher levels of social cohesion and mutual trust among neighbors. In these circumstances, residents develop a sense of collective efficacy that can lead to higher levels of informal social control (Sampson and Raudenbush 1999) which limit various forms of disorder and incivilities. In turn, residents live with greater satisfaction and social-psychological comfort (Robinson et al. 2003).

These more advantageous neighborhood conditions and the opportunities that they make available to residents are expected to lead in the end to a series of longer-term outcomes represented by the path from (C) to (D) in figure 1. Better education and employment opportunities are likely to lead to greater incomes and enhanced economic self-sufficiency. Access to education and training can help to reduce human capital deficiencies. Proximity to employment opportunities can help lower-income individuals overcome the obstacle of spatial mismatch. A greater perception of safety and a reduction in incivilities will reduce stress leading to improvements in mental and physical health. This is a positive outcome in its own right, but it also serves to enhance the employability of residents as well, contributing to greater economic self-sufficiency (see Levy and Woolley 2007). The reduction of adverse influences on youth will result in diminished rates of delinquency through the reduction of “contagion effects” (Crane 1991). Joseph et al. (2007; 378) describe an alternative chain of events by which informal social control will reduce delinquency:

[N]ew and strengthened interpersonal relationships among particular individuals lead to greater accountability to each other, and others whom they both know, such as their children. Those in these new networks who

commit a delinquent act are more likely to be recognized and held accountable by others. Less delinquent behavior leads to improved outcomes for individuals in those networks such as fewer arrests and lower rates of incarceration.

Alternatively, the existence of positive role models in the destination neighborhoods will influence youth toward more law-abiding, and socially and economically conventional behavior (Briggs 1997; see also the summary discussion in Joseph et al. 2007).

The Logic of Community Benefits

HUD incorporated two elements into the HOPE VI program that were explicitly designed to produce community benefits. First, HUD adopted new urbanist design principles as the standard for HOPE VI redevelopments, and second, the agency emphasized the potential for leveraging private sector investment. Thus, in the first case, the pathway from (A) to (B¹) in figure 1 is guided by a set of principles about how to create and design well-functioning communities. The federal HOPE VI program was positioned by its proponents as a response to the design flaws of much public housing in the country. The application of TND to public housing estates “promotes community bonds. Streets reintegrate the areas physically into the urban grid. High-rises are converted into town homes, each with a street level entrance. Porches are added to establish a private space in the public realm, thus creating a secure venue for social interaction.” (Lang and Hornburg, 1998: 10). In 1995 HUD officially adopted the design principles of TND to use in all HOPE VI projects. The agency’s statement of principles for inner city neighborhood design suggests, among others:

- Replacing barrack-style public housing with street-facing and human-scaled buildings, livable streets, and a public realm.
- Redeveloping public housing sites into mixed-use developments that incorporate diverse housing types and economic levels, civic uses, recreation, and neighborhood commercial uses.
- Replacing super-blocks with new streets similar in size and orientation to the surrounding community.
- Achieving safety and civic engagement by providing ‘eyes on the street’, and target hardening initiatives such as gates and protected private areas that nevertheless maintain a link to the surrounding community (Collaboration, no date).

Thus, the form of redevelopment in HOPE VI projects is stylized (see box B¹ in figure 1). The new site will emphasize a mix of incomes and an urban design that are both meant to facilitate the production of greater social capital within the community. This new landscape of public housing is intended to generate several positive outcomes (see, link B¹→C¹ in figure 1).

The mix of incomes will directly reduce the concentration of poverty on-site. If spillover benefits occur, the surrounding neighborhood may become attractive to middle income groups and the deconcentration of poverty would accelerate through the larger neighborhood. In fact, the HOPE VI program has grown into one that is meant to generate significant spillover effects in the neighborhoods in which it operates (Zielenbach 2002). The emphasis on leveraging private capital that HUD introduced in 1995 is in practice an incentive for projects located in neighborhoods ripe for private

investment. By Fiscal Year 2002, local housing authorities were required to demonstrate how their proposed HOPE VI redevelopment would “result in outside investment in the surrounding community” (GAO 2002). Part of the emphasis on the neighborhood impacts of HOPE VI is driven by the belief among HUD officials that the program *must* generate spillover effects to succeed: “If the HOPE VI process does not help to solidify and revitalize the neighborhoods that surround each development, then the sustainability of these developments is thrown into question.” (HUD 2002a, p. 36) Thus, HUD attempted to choose projects that they felt had the greatest potential to spur additional public and private investment in the form of new or rehabilitated housing, commercial investment, new jobs and improved public infrastructure, attempting to institutionalize into the program the practices that would generate the outcomes described in (C¹).

In addition, property values rise from the infusion of new capital, the demolition of older decrepit structures and their replacement with new, well-designed housing and commercial structures. Design attention to defensible space will reduce opportunities for criminal activity on-site as will the transition to a mixed-income community. Crime rates will fall (at least on the site of the old public housing project).

The ultimate impacts of a successful public housing redevelopment would include the creation and maintenance of a stable community in which population and capital flow in and out of the neighborhood in a balanced way. The new neighborhood would be characterized by greater levels of social cohesion and collective efficacy, and the reduced service needs of the population would put less demand on local government, while enhanced property values increase tax revenues. Thus, the community would stop being a net fiscal drain and instead become a magnet for investment and for residents. Middle

income residents would be attracted back to the neighborhood and existing middle income residents would not be so tempted to flee. As businesses return to the area, jobs would be created for local residents, further reducing poverty and dependency.

The Record

The HOPE VI experience to date suggests that while some of the intended outcomes have been produced, the model has not generated expected changes in others. This is especially true with respect to the individual level benefits outlined across the top of Figure 1. The figure presents a highly simplified schema of the many steps and relationships necessary to produce the positive individual benefits of HOPE VI. Many of the linkages highlighted in figure 1 and detailed in the discussion above, hide a profusion of intermediate links. To take but one example, dispersal “will improve education outcomes for the children ...*provided* families successfully relocate, children accompany their parents to the new neighborhoods, the educational opportunities experienced by children are higher in their new environments, and ...parents and children react to these changes in ways that translate into improved educational outcomes” (Ladd and Ludwig 1997; emphasis in the original). One might add to that the caution that any unforeseen crisis in health or family stability, conditioned by the child’s (or family’s) previous residence in a high-poverty neighborhood, could also prevent the expected positive outcomes from materializing. Many of the linkages above could be extended in a similar manner to expose fairly lengthy chains of events that need to occur for each of the individual benefits shown in Figure 1 to be realized. Depicted in the figure as a fairly simple four stage process, the process of individual benefits from displacement is in fact

quite contingent for some outcomes. In general, the more contingent and indirect the benefit, the less likely it is to have been produced by the program.

The link between (A) and (B) is itself tenuous. First, in the HOPE VI program and others like it in which families are involuntarily displaced due to government action, residents are entitled to assistance moving but they are not obligated to move to any particular neighborhood (Goetz 2003). This is a major difference between HOPE VI and the voluntary mobility programs such as MTO and the Gautreaux program in Chicago. In the mobility programs, participants must move to neighborhoods below program-set thresholds for poverty or non-white population. In HOPE VI, displaced families move without such restrictions. The result is that the degree of geographic dispersal is not as great as it is in mobility programs. Although studies have shown that HOPE VI and other public housing displacees do, in fact, move to neighborhoods with less poverty and signs of distress (Buron et al. 2002; Clampet-Lundquist 2004; Trudeau 2006), the *degree* of neighborhood improvement, at least according to more objective indicators from the census, is not as great as is seen in voluntary programs (Fischer 2003; Varady and Walker 2000).

Second, there is no certainty that better neighborhoods, as we have operationalized the term, produce the types of benefits we expect. The uncertainty here is two-fold. First, we measure neighborhood deprivation in terms of poverty or the degree of racial segregation. But, we are not certain that the types of neighborhood benefits pursued in the HOPE VI program are produced by reductions in poverty or segregation, or whether a reduction in actual neighborhood *conditions* such as crime rates is necessary. Goetz (forthcoming) and Buron and Patrabansh (2008) examine the question

of whether census indicators of neighborhood quality correlate with the subjective ratings of subsidized household members. The evidence suggests little to no correlation exists.

In addition, there is uncertainty as to what the important thresholds are to trigger the changes sought (see Galster et al. 2000). Mobility programs, for example, are set to specific metrics of poverty rate or rate of racial/ethnic segregation. MTO, for example, directs the relocation of low-income families into neighborhoods with less than a 10% poverty rate. The Gautreaux program directed families into neighborhoods with less than 30% African-American population. Quite apart from the question as to whether such measures are appropriate indicators, it is not clear that the thresholds that drive our programs are the critical ones necessary to generate benefits. This issue is even more germane in the HOPE VI program where neighborhood improvements in terms of poverty rate reduction and decreased rates of racial/ethnic segregation are much more modest.

Once having moved to a new neighborhood, HOPE VI families are presumed to receive the benefits of improved neighborhood conditions. An examination of the benefits identified in box (C) of figure 1 would lead us to expect some of these benefits will be experienced more widely and consistently than others. The benefits of greater safety and reduced social disorder, for example, are enjoyed passively. That is, residents need not take any action, nor engage institutions or social structures in order to feel safer or enjoy the reduction of social disorder they perceive in their new neighborhoods. Thus, we would expect displaced families to be more likely to identify these particular benefits resulting from relocation. Studies of HOPE VI (and MTO) confirm this expectation. Research findings consistently indicate that displaced HOPE VI families report an

increased sense of safety and lower levels of social disorder (Popkin and Cove 2007; Gibson 2007; Goetz 2003). These benefits are the most consistently identified of the entire range of outcomes studied.

Other expected neighborhood advantages of relocation (access to greater employment opportunities, better schools, and higher levels of social capital) are not experienced passively. For these benefits to be manifest to new residents, relocatees must take active steps, and must engage public and private institutions and social structures that may remain biased in ways that make it difficult for residents to realize benefits. Employment is perhaps the best example. Displacement from distressed public housing may well eliminate problems of spatial mismatch and put residents into proximity to a greater number of job opportunities. For that to benefit the resident, however, a series of additional preconditions must be met. The job openings that exist must match or be appropriate to the training, education, or experience of the resident. The resident must become aware of the appropriate job openings. The hiring process must be free of discrimination so that the resident is not unfairly treated due to skin color or ethnicity. The resident must be healthy enough to be able to pursue the employment, must have the necessary child care in place, and the means to get to and from the interview and the job site. A similar set of contingencies might be listed for taking advantage of educational opportunities or accessing enhanced social capital.

Because of these important contingencies, we would expect that these benefits of displacement and relocation would be much more intermittently reported by HOPE VI families. Indeed, this is the case. School achievement and engagement among children of HOPE VI families, is not greater in new neighborhoods or relative to comparison

groups (Gallagher and Bajaj 2007; Jacob 2004). The findings related to employment and economic security are especially disappointing for HOPE VI (as well as for MTO and Gautreaux, see Goetz and Chapple 2009). Families forcibly removed from HOPE VI and other public housing projects and displaced to other neighborhoods show no increase in employment nor any improvement in economic self-sufficiency (see Levy and Woolley 2007; Clampet-Lundquist 2004; Goetz 2003; Vigdor 2007). Levy and Woolley (2007; 1), for example, point to the significant health problems of relocatees as barriers to employment. These authors conclude that “HOPE VI relocation and voluntary supportive services are unlikely to affect employment or address the many factors that keep disadvantaged residents out of the labor force.” Put differently, the contingent relationships and actions necessary to produce an employment benefit are not influenced by relocation alone.

The impact of displacement on social capital is especially problematic. Movers report difficulty in establishing new social ties, they miss their social milieu from the old neighborhood and worry about isolation in their new places (Greenbaum et al. 2008; Trudeau, 2006; Clampet-Lundquist, 2004, 2007; Gibson, 2007; Kleit 2001, 2002). Manzo et al. (2008) find that the HOPE VI assumption that the residents of distressed public housing suffer from lack of social capital or sense of community may not hold. Public housing residents they interviewed “had positive things to say about the housing development and the impact it has had on their own lives” (Manzo et al., p. 1866). Two-thirds felt their project was a good place to live (see also Gibson 2007 and Atkinson and Kintrea 2004 for similar findings from deprived neighborhoods in Glasgow and Edinburgh).

The record of community level benefits

Importantly, many of the community level benefits identified in the HOPE VI model are associated with population turnover rather than upward mobility of original residents. This is certainly true in the short term. Private investment in the community is attracted by the prospect of consumers with the buying power to sustain businesses. Crime is reduced in part through the displacement of gangs and low-income residents upon whom criminals prey. Property values increase in response to more upscale housing, inhabited by those paying market rate prices in the mixed-income communities created by HOPE VI.

The few empirical studies of neighborhood change at HOPE VI sites confirm this basic observation, and they document significant and consistent positive changes. Zielenbach (2003) for example, found a great deal of neighborhood improvement taking place in the HOPE VI areas he investigated. Seven of the eight neighborhoods increased their education levels, five gained white population (and thus became more integrated), and six increased their per capita income relative to the city. Crime declined significantly on each site.

Turbov and Piper (2005) found generally positive impacts on crime and nearby housing markets in the four neighborhoods they examined. Holin et al. (2003) found significant reductions in crime, poverty, and unemployment in HOPE VI neighborhoods relative to citywide changes. Survey results generally indicated that neighbors of the HOPE VI sites perceived their areas as improving; though the magnitude of the improvement varied from site to site.

The U.S. General Accounting Office (2003) documents improvements in education, income, and housing conditions at the 20 HOPE VI sites that received grants in 1996. Average household income increased in 15 of the 20 sites, the percentage of the population with a high school diploma increased in 18 of the sites. Housing values increased in 13 neighborhoods and housing costs in 15. One-half of the neighborhoods experienced an increase in mortgage lending, though significant decreases in lending were evident in seven of the neighborhoods.

HUD (2002b) notes a number of projects in which redevelopment has spurred private investment, including Earle Village in Charlotte, Mission Main in Boston, Hillside Terrace in Milwaukee, and the Manchester Homes project in Pittsburgh. Manchester is called a “textbook example of how HOPE VI spurs private investment. People are coming back to the neighborhood, moving into rehabilitated 1840s row houses and stabilizing the market rate sector of the housing stock” (HUD 2002b, p. 49). In Columbus, Ohio, the redevelopment of the Windsor Terrace project “convinced a paint manufacturer in an adjacent neighborhood to spend \$32 million to upgrade its facility instead of moving to the suburbs” (HUD 2002b, p. 6).

There is, according to Kingsley, et al. (2003, p. 33) “little doubt that HOPE VI redevelopments have unleashed impressive market and other improvement in their broader communities.” The issue in some HOPE VI sites is whether too much market activity has been unleashed. Newman (2002) finds evidence of gentrification at the Techwood development in Atlanta. In Chicago, the transformation of the neighborhood surrounding the Cabrini HOPE VI project is often cited as an example of gentrification triggered by public housing redevelopment. The Cabrini area went from being one of the

most notoriously dangerous places in the city of Chicago to “a largely mixed-income community of well-maintained townhouses located next to a new shopping center with a Starbucks café” (Harvard Law Review 2003; see also Bennett and Reed 1999). In New Orleans, property values in the neighborhood around the St. Thomas HOPE VI redevelopment increased by over 80 percent in the 12 months following the project’s demolition (Bagart 2002), and the Earle Village project in Charlotte triggered a tenfold increase in property values in the First Ward Place neighborhood (HUD 2002b). This type of gentrification, also noted for the Knoxville neighborhood surrounding the College Hill Homes, is called “a troubling impact” of the program by HUD (2002b, p. 39) because of the degree to which it reduces housing affordability and forces the indirect displacement of lower-income households who can not afford increasing housing costs.

Troubling perhaps, but not always unintentional (Hackworth 2007). Leveraging private investment is one of the main objectives of HOPE VI redevelopment. Calibrating the amount of that new investment so that it is sufficient to produce neighborhood improvement but modest enough to avoid triggering wholesale gentrification is difficult when the attempt is made. Wyly and Hammel (1999) document the ways in which HOPE VI redevelopment plans attempt to take advantage of local housing markets that are poised to take off, awaiting only the removal of archaic and worn-out public housing. In these locations, HOPE VI becomes one more element in a strategy of public and private investment that is aimed at removing “islands of decay in seas of renewal.” (Wyly and Hammel 1999) The direct displacement of public housing residents via demolition is in these cases supplemented by the indirect displacement of their neighbors via the market.

Conclusion

The HOPE VI logic model, while not providing a full theoretical framework for the expected benefits of public housing displacement and relocation, does provide a guide for understanding how the program was designed to work. It also provides a way to make sense of the research findings to date on the program outcomes of HOPE VI.

The often complicated and extensive chain of events that must occur for individual benefits to materialize provide context for understanding the modest level of benefits documented in most studies. Relocation away from highly distressed public housing environments may be enough to reduce acute levels of fear and anxiety related to crime and social disorder, but it is insufficient in itself to affect all of the factors that go into determining economic well-being or physical health. Furthermore, evidence points to the fact that forced displacement interrupts social support networks that are important to very low-income families, and actually impedes their ability to experience benefits of relocation. The HOPE VI record for most of the original residents is of limited and inconsistent benefits. Their moves to marginally better neighborhoods leave them feeling safer on average, but do not consistently generate other material benefits.

On the other hand, there is an impressive degree of neighborhood change that is induced by HOPE VI redevelopments in cities across the country. This is true by definition when the analysis is confined to the actual redevelopment site where worn-out and distressed public housing projects are replaced with brand new mixed-income developments emphasizing traditional neighborhood design. The evidence also shows, however, that HOPE VI projects in many cities have generated significant secondary changes in the surrounding neighborhoods. In this respect the program has succeeded in

ways that HUD and Congress desired. The program has activated nascent land markets or swept away the last remaining obstacles to gentrification in many neighborhoods. Community level benefits of enhanced tax base and reduced service demands have been realized. That these benefits occur alongside a change in population, combined with the inconsistent benefits reported by the original residents in their new neighborhoods, suggests that the legacy of HOPE VI to date is one of a ‘spatial fix’ to economic stagnation in American urban cores (Hackworth 2007).

Whether this changes over time as relocated families recreate social networks and overcome the short term disruption of displacement remains to be seen. It does suggest changes that might be made to the program to minimize the disruption to public housing families and to connect them more directly to the community level benefits produced by redevelopment. Phased redevelopment approaches that allow residents to stay on-site while work is done would avoid displacement and relocation, as would more tolerance for renovation over demolition. Ironically, a return to urban renewal era concerns about the adverse impacts of displacement seems a precondition for such changes.

The focus on deconcentrating poverty in HOPE VI and other dispersal programs in the U.S. emerged as a means of bypassing political opposition to racial integration policy goals. But, the shift from racial desegregation to poverty deconcentration is more than semantic. Both racial desegregation and poverty deconcentration approaches conceptualize some degree of residential mobility as the policy goal. In these terms, the racial ghetto or the high-poverty neighborhood can be seen as the “origin” neighborhood while the racially exclusive neighborhoods (in the case of desegregation) or middle income neighborhoods (in the case of deconcentration) are “destination” neighborhoods.

For desegregation or deconcentration policy to achieve its goals there must be some flow of population from origin to destination communities. Racial integration policies in the U.S., which have historically been concerned with “opening up the suburbs” to integration (Roisman 2001), and reducing the barriers (both legal and illicit) constructed by communities attempting to maintain racial exclusivity, focus their interventions on the destination neighborhoods. That is to say, “fair housing” initiatives typically seek to change the policies of exclusionary communities, or the practices of realtors and other housing professionals in exclusionary areas. Put another way, the focus of housing integration policy has typically been on the communities that have erected barriers to the exercise of full choice in the housing market. Desegregation policy “works” when racial minorities gain access to *particular* communities or particular kinds of communities that had been denied to them in the past.

The shift from racial segregation to poverty deconcentration as embodied in the HOPE VI program, shifts the target of public policy away from the community erecting barriers to the community suffering from the segregation/concentration. The program is an intervention into conditions in the ghetto, not into the exclusionary practices of communities or private sector brokers. The HOPE VI model, as described in this article, assumes that the demolition and redevelopment of the ghetto neighborhood (in this case the public housing estate) will set into motion a series of steps that will produce benefits for the ghetto residents themselves. The program carries with it no prescription related to any particular destination community or any class of destination communities. Residents are relocated anywhere under the presumption that anywhere is better than where they had started. Such an approach underestimates the value that residents place on the web of

social supports and networks that they have created for themselves, and their attachment to place. At the same time it overestimates the degree of upward mobility in housing markets that displaced families will realize, and thus overstates the material benefits experienced by the residents. Finally, it oversimplifies the relationship between place and economic well-being by ignoring the complexities and contingencies involved in the efforts of low-income people attempting to translate neighborhood environmental changes into economic self-sufficiency. In the end, the HOPE VI experience provides support for Roisman's (2001) argument that a policy focus on economic desegregation is unlikely to produce a significant degree of racial desegregation. More troubling is that, in addition, the program's record reveals such limited and inconsistent economic benefits.

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¹ The U.S. public housing program is funded by the federal government but administered by local "housing authorities," public agencies that are created at the municipal (and sometimes county) level.